1775 a 2 /13

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

A MASQUE.

By Mr. CONGREVE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MERCURY. PARIS. JUNO. PALLAS. VENUS.

The Scene is a Landscape of a beautiful Pasture supposed on Mount Ida. *The Shepherd* Paris *is seen seated under a Tree, and playing on his Pipe; his Crook and Scrip, &c. lying by him. While a Symphony is playing,* Mercury *descends with his Caduceus in one Hand, and an Apple of Gold in the other; After the Symphony, he sings.*

MERCURY.

FROM high Olympus, and the realms above,
Behold I come the messenger of Jove;
His dread commands I bear;
Shepherd arise and hear;
Arise, and leave a while thy rural care;
Forbear thy woolly flock to feed,
And lay aside thy tuneful reed;
For thou to greater honours art decreed.

PARIS.

O Hermes, I thy godhead know,
By thy winged heels and head;
By thy rod that wakes the dead,
And guides the shades below.
Say wherefore dost thou seek this humble plain,
To greet a lowly swain?
What does the mighty thunderer ordain?

MERCURY.

This radiant fruit behold,
More bright than burnish'd gold;
Three goddesses for this contend;
See! now they descend,
And this way they bend.
Shepherd, take the golden prize,
Yield it to the brightest eyes.

[Juno, Pallas, *and* Venus, *are seen at a Distance, descending in several Machines.*

PARIS.

O ravishing delight!
What mortal can support the sight!
Alas, too weak is human brain,
So much rapture to sustain!
I faint, I fall; O take me hence,
Ere extasy invades my aching sense;
Help me, Hermes, or I die;
Save me from excess of joy.

MERCURY.

Fear not, mortal, none shall harm thee,
With my sacred rod I'll charm thee;
Freely gaze, and view all over;
Thou may'st ev'ry grace discover.
Though a thousand deeds fly round thee,
Fear not, mortal, none shall wound thee.

In two Parts.

Happy thou, of human race,
Gods with thee would change their place.

PARIS.

With no god I'd change my place,
Happy I of human race.

[Mercury *ascends.*

[*While a Symphony is playing,* Juno *descends from her Machine; after the Symphony she sings.*]

JUNO.

Saturnia, wife of thund'ring Jove, am I;
Belov'd by him, and empress of the sky.
Shepherd, fix on me thy wond'ring sight;
Beware, and view me well, and judge aright.

[*Symphony for* Pallas.]

PALLAS.

This way, mortal, bend thy eyes,
Pallas claims the golden prize;
A virgin goddess free from stain,
And queen of arts and arms I reign.

[*Symphony for* Venus.]

VENUS.

Hither turn thee, gentle swain,
Let not Venus sue in vain:
Venus rules the gods above,
Love rules them, and she rules love.
Hither turn thee, gentle swain.

PALLAS.

Hither turn to me again.

JUNO.

Turn to me, for I am she.

All Three.

To me, to me, for I am she.

VENUS.

Hither turn thee, gentle swain.

JUNO *and* PALLAS.

She will deceive thee.

VENUS.

They will deceive thee; I'll never leave thee.

Chorus of all Three.

Hither turn to me again,
To me, to me, for I am she;
Hither turn thee, gentle swain.

PARIS.

I.

Distracted I turn, but I cannot decide;
So equal a title sure never was try'd.
United, your beauties do dazzle the sight,
That lost in amaze,
I giddily gaze,
Confus'd and o'erwhelm'd with a torrent of light.

II.

Apart let me view then each heav'nly fair,
For three at a time there's no mortal can bear;
And since a gay robe an ill shape may disguise,
When each is undrest,
I'll judge of the best,
For 'tis not a face that must carry the prize.

JUNO.

JUNO *sings alone.*

I.

Let ambition fire thy mind,
Thou wert born o'er men to reign,
Not to follow flocks design'd;
Scorn thy crook, and leave the plain.

II.

Crowns I'll throw beneath thy feet,
Thou on necks of kings shalt tread;
Joys in circles joys shall meet,
Which way e'er thy fancy's led.

III.

Let not toils of empire fright,
Toils of empire pleasures are;
Thou shalt only know delight,
All the joy, but not the care.

IV.

Shepherd, if thou'lt yield the prize
For the blessings I bestow,
Joyful I'll ascend the skies,
Happy thou shalt reign below.

CHORUS.

Let ambition fire thy mind,
Thou wert born o'er men to reign,
Not to follow flocks design'd;
Scorn thy crook, and leave the plain.

PALLAS *sings alone.*

I.

Awake, away, thy spirits raise,
Waste not thus thy youthful days,
Piping, toying,
Nymphs decoying,
Lost in wanton and inglorious ease.

II.

Hark, hark! the glorious voice of war
Calls aloud, for arms prepare:
Drums are beating,
Rocks repeating,
Martial music charms the joyful air.

[*Symphony.*]

PALLAS *ſings.*

O what joys does conqueſt yield!
When returning from the field;
Oh, how glorious 'tis to ſee
The godlike hero crown'd with victory!
Laurel wreaths his head ſurrounding,
Banners waving in the wind;
Fame her golden trumpet ſounding,
Ev'ry voice in chorus join'd.
To me, kind ſwain, the prize reſign,
And fame and conqueſt ſhall be thine.

CHORUS.

O how glorious 'tis to ſee
The godlike hero crown'd with victory!

[*Symphony.*]

VENUS *ſings alone.*

Stay, lovely youth, delay thy choice,
Take heed leſt empty names enthral thee,
Attend to Cytherea's voice;
Lo! I who am Love's mother call thee.
Far from thee be anxious care,
And racking thoughts that vex the great:
Empire's but a gilded ſnare,
And fickle is the warrior's fate.
One only joy mankind may know,
And love alone can that beſtow.

CHORUS.

One only joy, &c.

VENUS *ſings.*

I.

Nature fram'd thee, ſure, for loving,
Thus adorn'd with ev'ry grace;
Venus ſelf thy form approving,
Looks with pleaſure on thy face.

II.

Happy nymph who ſhall enfold thee,
Circled in her yielding arms!
Should bright Helen once behold thee,
She'd ſurrender all her charms.

III.

Faireſt ſhe, all nymphs tranſcending,
That the ſun himſelf has ſeen;
Were ſhe for the crown contending,
Thou would'ſt own her beauty's queen.

IV.

Gentle ſhepherd, if my pleading
Can from thee the prize obtain,
Love himſelf thy conqueſt aiding,
Thou that matchleſs fair ſhalt gain.

PARIS.

I yield, I yield; O take the prize,
And ceaſe, O ceaſe th' enchanting ſong;
All Love's darts are in thy eyes,
And harmony falls from thy tongue.
Forbear, O goddeſs of deſire,
Thus my raviſh'd ſoul to move;
Forbear to fan the raging fire,
And be propitious to my love.

[*Here* Paris *gives to* Venus *the Golden Apple. Several Cupids deſcend; the three Graces alight from the Chariot of* Venus; *they call the Hours, who aſſemble; with all the Attendants on* Venus. *All join in a Circle round her, and ſing the laſt grand Chorus; while* Juno *and* Pallas *aſcend.*]

GRAND CHORUS.

Hither all ye graces, all ye loves,
Hither all ye hours reſort;
Billing ſparrows, cooing doves;
Come all ye train of Venus court.
Sing all great Cytherea's name;
Over empire, over fame,
Her victory proclaim.
Sing, and ſpread the joyful news around;
The queen of love is queen of beauty crown'd.

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